

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4826

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

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TAGS: PFOR, SY, EG, IS, US

SUBJECT: FONMIN KHADDAM DETAILS SYRIAN OPPOSITION TO
SINAI AGREEMENT

1. SUMMARY. IN INTERVIEW WITH DAMASCUS DAILY TISHRIIN (OCTOBER), FONMIN KHADDAM REPEATED AND EMBELLISHED SYRIAN CASE AGAINST AGREEMENT WHICH HE PORTRAYED AS REMOVING EGYPT FROM CONFLICT, COMMITTING U.S. TO LONG-TERM MILITARY, FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL, AND STIPULATING DELIVERY OF LARGE QUANTITIES OF WEAPONS TO ISRAEL. HE SAW SECRET ANNEXES TO AGREEMENT AS HEAVILY FAVORING ISRAEL, EVINCED GROWING SKEPTICISM ABOUT RECONVENING GENEVA CONFERENCE AND CALLED ON EGYPT TO ABROGATE AGREEMENT NOW, BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION IS BEGUN. END SUMMARY.

2. OCT. 9 PRESS REPORTED INTERVIEW BY FONMIN KHADDAM TO NEW DAMASCUS DAILY NEWSPAPER TISHRIIN (OCTOBER). WHILE MUCH OF FULL-PAGE INTERVIEW WAS STANDARD REPETITION OF SYRIAN CRITICISMS OF SINAI AGREEMENT, KHADDAM DEVOTED
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SIGNIFICANT SPACE TO SARG CONCERN THAT CONVENING GENEVA

CONFERENCE MIGHT NOT BE IN ARAB INTEREST. KHADDAM ALSO SET TIME LIMIT WITHIN WHICH EGYPT SHOULD ABROGATE AGREEMENT.

3. ACCORDING TO KHADDAM, SINAI AGREEMENT HAS LED TO FOLLOWING HARMFUL CONSEQUENCES: EGYPT HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM CONFLICT AND SPLIT ARAB CAUSE; U.S. HAS COMMITTED ITSELF TO LONG-TERM MILITARY, FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL; AND U.S. HAS AGREED TO SHIP "HUGE QUANTITIES OF EXTREMELY COMPLICATED WEAPONS" TO ISRAEL TO FORESTALL POTENTIAL ARAB RESORT TO FORCE "OR USE OF PEACEFUL ECONOMIC PRESSURES" AGAINST ISRAEL. IN FONMIN'S VIEW, SECRET ANNEXES "CONSTITUTE AMERICAN GUARANTEE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF SINAI AGREEMENT AND IN EFFECT MAKE ISRAEL AN INDIRECT MEMBER OF NATO." PAST STATEMENTS OF GENERAL AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL HAVE NOW BEEN CODIFIED INTO "LEGAL PLEDGE BY WHICH U.S. PLEDGED ITSELF TO GROUP OF COMMITMENTS CONNECTED WITH ECONOMIC, MILITARY AND POLITICAL QUESTIONS." KHADDAM CLAIMED THAT MILITARY ANNEXES COMMIT U.S. TO AID LEVEL OF FIFTEEN BILLION DOLLARS DURING NEXT FIVE YEARS AND ASKED, "IF THIS IS PRICE U.S. MUST PAY TO SECURE WITHDRAWAL FROM FIVE PERCENT OF SINAI, HOW MUCH WILL COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL COST?" HE ALSO NOTED ANNEXES HAD GIVEN ISRAEL FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION FROM GIBRALTAR TO BAB AL-MANDAB. U.S., HE CLAIMED, HAD BEEN OBLIGED IN SECRET ANNEX WITH ISRAEL TO ADOPT POSITION ON PALESTINIAN ISSUE IN CONFLICT WITH UN RESOLUTIONS.

4. NOTING EGYPTIAN PROTESTS OVER SUPPLY OF PERSHING MISSILES TO ISRAEL, KHADDAM STATED THAT "IF THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT DOES NOT AGREE TO THESE ANNEXES THEN IT SHOULD HASTEN TO ABROGATE THE SINAI AGREEMENT." HE ADDED THAT EGYPT HAD TO TAKE THIS ACTION BEFORE EFFECTIVE DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION OR ELSE AGREEMENT WOULD ENTER INTO EFFECT AND REMAIN SO UNTIL REPLACED BY NEW ONE. IF THAT HAPPENED, "EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE SHACKLED ITSELF AND THE COMING GENERATIONS WITH EXTREMELY GRAVE COMMITMENTS." KHADDAM NOTED THAT EGYPT HAD HAD NO DIFFICULTY ANNULING ITS COMMITMENTS TO JOINT ARAB DEFENSE TREATY AND TO RABAT SUMMIT RESOLUTIONS, SO IT SHOULD NOT BE DIFFICULT FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IT TO ANNUL SINAI ACCORD.

5. FONMIN PAID PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO PROSPECTS FOR CONVENING GENEVA CONFERENCE. CLAIMING THAT U.S. HAD DRAWN BACK FROM HOLDING CONFERENCE BECAUSE CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD HAVE FAVOURED ARABS, HE DESCRIBED ALTERNATIVE STEP-BY-STEP POLICY IMPLEMENTED BY U.S. AS DIVIDING ARABS AND CREATING MORE FAVORABLE CONDITIONS FOR ISRAEL. REFERRING TO ANNEX WHICH

STIPULATED THAT "RECONVENING OF THE GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE WILL BE AT A DATE TO BE THE SUBJECT OF COORDINATION BETWEEN THE U.S. AND ISRAEL," KHADDAM CHARGED THAT U.S. HAD THEREBY COMMITTED ITSELF TO TURNING GENEVA CONFERENCE INTO "ISRAELI CONFERENCE." HE ADDED, IS IT STILL POSSIBLE TO ACCEPT THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE U.S. FOR ANY CONFERENCE SUCH AS THIS, AND IS IT POSSIBLE FOR THE ARABS FOLLOWING THIS STIPULATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A CONFERENCE DECIDED UPON BY THE U.S. AND ISRAEL?" HE ALSO ACCUSED U.S. OF UNDERMINING CONFERENCE BY PLEDGING TO WORK FOR CONDUCTING BASIC NEGOTIATIONS OUTSIDE CONFERENCE WITHIN BILATERAL FRAMEWORK: "THIS MEANS FIRST EMPTYING THE CONFERENCE AND TERMINATING ITS TASKS AND ALSO MEANS ADOPTING THE ISRAELI THEORY FOR BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS THROUGH WHICH ISRAEL WILL ISOLATE THE ARABS TO ACHIEVE ITS GAINS."

6. COMMENT. KHADDAM'S INTERVIEW IS FULLEST PUBLIC SYRIAN REACTION TO "SECRET ANNEXES" OF SINAI ACCORD. HE HAS ALSO LAUNCHED SOME NEW ACCUSATIONS AGAINST EGYPT (HAVING ANNULLED JOINT ARAB DEFENSE TREATY) AND U.S. (MAKING ISRAEL INDIRECT MEMBER OF NATO). MOST NOTEWORTHY POINT, PERHAPS, IS SUSPICION WITH WHICH HE VIEWS GENEVA CONFERENCE, SEEING IN U.S.-ISRAELI AGREEMENT TO CONSULT WITH REGARD TO RECONVENING CONFERENCE AN IMPLIED COMMITMENT TO MAKE IT SERVE ISRAELI OBJECTIVES.
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